

The Smiling Skies

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“You should know, [Hashem’s] presence fills the entire earth and there is no place that is empty of Him...Even if someone does business [far away from his home] with people of different cultures, he can’t excuse himself and say ‘I can’t serve Hashem here, because it’s too dark and mundane here’. In every physical thing and in all the languages of the world one can find Godliness. Because without His Godliness, there is no ability at all to exist. It’s just that the lower the place is, the more hidden and covered up is its Godliness”. ([Torah 33](#))

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So Hashem's presence fills the entire world, right? But how does that help when we're stuck in a these low places? How can we recognize His presence when we feel like hell and are having such a hard time coping?

There are 12 permutations of the Tetragrammaton (the name of Hashem א-ת-נ-ו). The simplest, and yet most essential permutation is of course א-ת-נ-ו. The [Arizal](#) writes that this permutation is an acronym for the verse "וְיִשְׂמְחוּ שָׁמַיִם וְאֶרֶץ" ([Psalms, 96:11](#)). "The Heavens will rejoice and the earth will be glad".

I think, on the most basic level, the idea behind this is that the name of God, in its simplest form, is represented by rejoicing and joy. A name is not a simple thing. The [Maharal](#) teaches that one's name is his essence. א-ת-נ-ו (name) is the same letters as א-ת-נ-ו (there). Meaning, you are where your name is. Whatever your name is, that defines where/who you are. This verse is indicating, that when we refer to Hashem's name in the most straightforward way, we are referring to a state of gladness and rejoicing.

So maybe this is what [Rebbe Nachman](#) means? Hashem's presence is everywhere, even in the lowest places. But how does one tap-in to this Godliness in a low place? By finding joy! When we can let go of our suffocating feelings and find something to be glad about – even in what seems to be the hardest situation – we can find Godliness absolutely anywhere. Of course, the lower the space, the harder it is to find Godliness (aka joy), but that's just because it's hidden. It's truly there. The skies are always smiling.

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